FILIPINO MUSIC.

THE TAGALOS' ARTISTIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

San Isidro, Philippine Islands, January 30.

Music holds a high place in the esteem of the Filipinos. And it is music such as we know that particularly appeals to them. Naturally inclined to such an accomplishment, many of the young women of purest Tagalo families have received careful instruction in both instrumental and vocal branches of the art, and often display not only talent, but much cultivation.

In addition to the band that exists in nearly every town, no matter how insignificant in size, there is almost invariably a small but capable orchestra. Though primarily for service in the churches, these orchestras are, nevertheless, available for fiestas or other purely social affairs. One hears much of the Filipino bands as being only players "by ear." This is an error. The bandsmen, in common with the other members of the race, are undoubtedly gifted with a quick ear for simple strains, and, like the Southern negro, possess a well developed faculty for harmony. It is not, however, upon these natural qualifications alone that their musical execution depends. The music of "Up the Street," "Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," together with the scores of many high-class orchestral compositions, is for sale by music houses on the crowded Escolta.

That the bands and orchestras play in public entirely without notes is principally due to a marvellous musical memory, and not to their ability to play "by ear," the commonly ascribed source of their cleverness. Diligent practice with notes in hand, coupled with a quick perception as to favorite band selections, made it possible for these native organizations to serenade the Americans with their own popular airs almost as soon as they were played by the American bands.

WANDERING MUSICIANS.

Occasionally wandering bands of musicians are seen in the smaller towns. They are strollers in the true sense of that word, since they idle their way along the green fringed dusty roads that wander in such an aimless way from village to village. These strolling musicians halt often by stream side or in shady place seemingly for additional practice of their simple tunes, but in reality stopping out of sheer do-nothingness. This class of music makers have for their usual equipment naught but sweet, clear-noted flutes, with which to carry the air, and curious double-barrelled horns, all of bamboo. Often desperately ragged, and always barefooted, the little group strikes up strange and weird airs, the time being equally as curious as the melody. Dust beats up in little puffs from beneath their splayed feet as the players mark the time; nimble fingers—sadly dirty, alas!—rise and fall or flutter over the openings in the creamy white bamboo flutes, and the quick, limpid notes of the favorite march, "Viva Pio del Pilar," are heard. Again they play. This time there trickles from the flutes the sweet notes of the song of the pilgrims to the shrine of Antipolo. They are the sounds of dropping water, of a crystal bell struck softly, or the clear high notes of the scarlet tanager in the cherry trees in far away America. And to the accompaniment of the larger instruments floats the song of the pilgrims along on even and gentle waves of bass and barytone, or sets the hot afternoon air throbbing with the deep "oomp, oomp" of the chorus of "Pio del Pilar con valor singular."

I have in mind one band in particular. The leader was a small man, even among his own undersized people. Though totally blind, he himself had made all the glistening horns and slender, polished flutes of his players. It was, perhaps, not music of high order that they gave us while we were halted for rest on the banks of the San Fernando, and yet it was not altogether displeasing. And when, as a finale, there rang in our ears the notes of "The Star Spangled Banner," with accompanying soft breathing from the heavier basses, the blind man stood erect and his tattered hat was dashed to the ground. Soldiers and players alike bared their heads, but none were quicker than the leader. Stage play perhaps it was, but we thought not; for never was an Englishman more devout in his toast of "The Queen! God bless her!" than was that Filipino when, the air concluded, he stretched out his arms appealingly, and, with choking voice, cried, "It is the song of liberty. Señors, I, too, was once a soldier and fought for liberty, holy liberty!"

From their homes we have frequently heard and enjoyed excellent piano music, and on the occasion when General Wheeler and staff were entertained by Señor Ambrosio Bautista, at the latter's home in Panique, after an indescribable meal, a real treat was given by the daughters of the house.

Schubert's Serenade and "Non è ver" took us completely by surprise. And when another daughter played Chaminade's "The Flatterer," and played it with that soft insistence that it deserves, our surprise was genuine astonishment.

THE YOUNGER PEOPLE PROFICIENT.

Such proficiency among the younger people is not rare, especially among the wealthier classes. Many of the larger homes have handsomely finished music rooms. In one magnificent house in Apalit one great room was decorated with creditable frescos. Upon the walls hung a well executed copy of St. Cecelia, with a number of engravings; some medallions of carved wood, with a beautiful music rack of the fine dark narra wood, and two pianos gave all needed evidence as to the taste of the family.

It was in a similar but smaller house in San Fernando that I once saw a life replica of the painting "On Outpost." A piano had been carried from a storeroom into the great paved lower hall that all the more substantial houses possess, and gathered around the instrument, or sitting on the wide stone stairway, was a crowd of 51st Iowa men. Song followed song, and listeners sat silent under the influence of music of home and of homeland. Candle lights shone only dimly, but faces glowed brightly when some favorite rang out. At the piano was a sergeant—a college boy—and his face was eager as he looked up once and said to the quartet: "Now, fellows, give us that medley that the glee club sang on our Illinois trip." Back they went to college days. As they sang the pretty medley, taps sounded from away up by headquarters, and as an echo the quartet drifted into the music of the call. Bret Harte's words, "From afar comes a star. Love, good night," never sounded more sweetly.

But it is a Filipino serenade that varies most widely from our preconceived notions concerning such gentle affairs. Here in these islands where moonlight nights of gorgeous brilliancy are in abundance; where ylang-ylang and dwarf orange trees bloom nearly the year round, filling the nights with fragrance; where there really seems to be nothing wanting in such seductive aids to softly breathed music beneath a window, the serenaders deliberately abandon such help and go by day to offer their tributes, delivering them from without the fence. Sunday morning seems to be the preferred day and hour, and only this week we at headquarters were entertained for an hour by an excellent orchestra as it played before the home of the village belle. Some of the numerous brothers of the lady had most evidently been sent scurrying to neighbors' homes for refreshments, for later we saw a roast pig handed over the back fence, to disappear up the rickety back stairs of bamboo. And not to miss the serenade—and the pig—two of the neighboring girls soon followed by way of back fence and stairs, what had evidently been intended for their family's Sunday dinner. Serenade and following feasting quite filled the time from church to cock fight. Cigarettes were burned by bunches, and Tagalo witticisms were evidently plentiful, for much laughter was heard. But all the girls in Luzon could not have kept the gallants and musicians away from the Sunday cock fight. So, at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, with a final lively air, orchestra and caballeros departed, the young women leaning out of the wide windows to wish good fortune to attend them in their afternoon's—sport, they call it.

MATZOS FOR PASSOVER.

A GREAT BOOM IN JEWISH BAKERIES BEGINNING.

There are ten or twelve business concerns on the East Side where work begins unusually early and continues until long after ordinary business hours at this season of the year. These are the bakeries where matzos, or unleavened bread, are made for use in Jewish households for the week beginning on April 14. This cracker bread, as it is called by some people, is turned out in large quantities for months before the Passover feast begins. Great quantities are shipped to all parts of the United States. The stock which is intended for home consumption is stored in large packing boxes awaiting the time for delivery to the consumer.

The matzos bakers usually start business about October 1, and run their machines leisurely while the solicitors are gathering the orders, and in the mean time large quantities are sold to people who buy them to take the place of crackers. These crackers are made of flour and water, and contain no salt. "They are becoming more popular every year," said one baker, "and if we had no customers who eat them for a week to commemorate the Passover feast, we should still bake them and find a market for a fair supply."

A barrel of flour yields about one hundred and seventy pounds of matzos, and as they are sold at various prices, ranging from 4 cents to 10 cents a pound, it is easy to see that making matzos has a commercial as well as a religious end.

As an illustration of the quantity turned out by the East Side bakeries, one of the larger of these usually consumes about thirty-five thousand barrels of flour in a season. The largest of these bakeries is not in the Jewish district. This is run the year round, and when the Jewish population is recovering from the indigestion caused by a week's indulgence in matzos and rich holiday food the big matzo bakery begins work on the next season's supply. The product of this large concern and of several other uptown places of that kind is circular in form, each piece being about the size of an ordinary teaplate, and these are packed in circular cartons containing from one to five pounds. The round matzos are not used by the orthodox Jews, who eat only the square ones.

An item of great importance during the Passover week is the flour which is used as a substitute for the ordinary article. This is of two kinds; one is made of potatoes, and the other and most commonly used is simply made of matzos ground into a fine powder.

The East Side bakeries from which the people in that district get their bread and cake during the rest of the year close their doors and practically go out of business during the Passover week, except those who have the means to substitute a complete outfit for the one generally in use, and use it to bake Passover dainties out of the peculiar flour. But the loss of the baker is the physicians' gain, and the Passover week is usually their busy season. There are not many Jews on the East Side who are so poor that they cannot indulge in the rich and indigestible food which comes with the Passover holidays, and those who are unable to provide their table are taken care of by their neighbors, who give cheerfully in order that all may indulge in the seven days' feast.

SCENE FROM "THE INTERRUPTED HONEYMOON," DALY'S THEATRE.

CHINESE CRIMINAL LAW.

From Notes and Commentaries of Chinese Law.

Hsii was guilty of hushing up for money the murder of one of his sons. Another son brought the case to light, and it was held that the father might benefit, and be excused, while the son, on the other hand, was sentenced to a hundred blows and three years' transportation for denouncing his brother's murder, because in doing so he had brought his father into danger of the law.

ENGLISH SUSPICIONS AROUSED.

From The Detroit Journal.

"Why," we ventured to inquire, although it was none of our business, "did you begin with treating the Boer as a joke?"

The British winced.

"Because," they answered, with an effort, but candidly, "we could not see him!"

The Boer, we hereupon recalled, does the bulk of his fighting from cover.